

(b) if so, the details of the recommendations made by the Commission; and

(c) if so, by what time Government are likely to consider its implementation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING (SHRI M.V. RAJASEKHARAN): (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

Rural and urban tele-density

888. MS. PRAMILA BOHIDAR:

SHRI B.J. PANDA:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that in India there is merely 2 per cent rural tele-density as compared to 31 per cent in urban areas;

(b) whether Government are aware that rural development is the most urgent need of the hour;

(c) if so, the action plan of Government to speed up rural tele-density in the country; and

(d) the status of rural tele-density in Orissa and the action plan of Government to sanction enhanced funds to improve this tele-density?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD): (a) Yes, Sir. The rural tele-density is 1.84% and that of urban is 49.53% as on 31.10.2006 (latest available).

(b) and (c) Yes, Sir. The following steps are being taken to improve the rural tele-density.

BSNL (Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited) has set a target to provide 10 lakh telephone lines in rural areas during 2006-07. In order to increase tele-density in rural areas, BSNL has taken following initiatives:—

- (i) BSNL has restored laying of under ground cable up to 5.0 Kms. of telephone exchange against the earlier standard 2.50 Kms. for providing telephone connection on landline.

- (ii) BSNL is deploying WLL (Wireless in Local Loop) network in rural areas to meet the demand of telephone connections beyond 5.0 Kms. of telephone exchange i.e. scattered and far-flung rural areas and where telephone connection is not possible on landlines.
- (iii) BSNL is deploying its mobile network to cover gaps in existing coverage and additional requirements based on customer requirements besides covering villages with population 5000 and above. In now planned expansion, BSNL plan to cover villages with population 1000 and above.

(d) The rural tele-density in Orissa State/Circle, as on 31.10.2006, is 1.15%. Total rural DELs (Direct Exchange Lines) in Orissa Circle as on 31.10.2006 are 3.81 lakhs.

The action plan to improve tele-density in rural areas of Orissa circle is given below:—

- (i) Opening of five new telephone exchanges.
- (ii) Installation of 50,000 lines of WLL equipment, which is received and installation is in progress.
- (iii) Installation of 74 Nos. of WLL BTS (Base Trans-receiver Station) of 23,500 lines capacity for which order had been placed and supply of the equipment is awaited.
- (iv) Installation of 116 CDMA (Code Division Multi Access) WLL BTS (MSC based) of capacity 50,000 lines which has been allotted for further expansion to cover the uncovered villages.

The funds required to undertake the above action plan will be made available.

Security concerns in Telecom Sector

889. SHRI KALRAJ MISHRA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government have decided to withhold its decision to hike FDI in telecom to 74 per cent;
- (b) if so, the reasons therefor; and